THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) The remedial measures taken in this regard include:

(i) with effect from 11th August, 2006, customs duty on Crude Palm Oil/Crude Palmolein has been reduced from 80% to 70% and customes duty on Refined Palm Oil/RBD Palmolein has been reduced from 90% to 80%.

(ii) The import duty structure of edible oils is reviewed from time to time.

(iii) Import of edible oils (except coconut oil) has been allowed under Open General License (OGL).

(iv) The prices and availability of edible oils are regularly monitored.

Impact of Import on Prices of Wheat, Pulses and Sugar

3069. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that following the announcement of permission of import of foodgrains by Government the prices of wheat, pulses and sugar have come down;

(b) if so, the respective percentage of decline in prices of the said products from February, 2006 to July, 2006; and

(c) the respective quantity of the above products imported in the country during the aforesaid period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Among the centres which are reporting retail prices of essential commodities, during February 2006 to July 2006, average monthly retail prices of wheat declined at Delhi (8.17%) Lucknow (9.23%), Jaipur (5.57%) and Bhubaneshwar (7.69%); prices of Tur dal declined at Delhi (1.26%), Lucknow (3.13%), Ahmedabad (0.16%) and Chennai (4.83%): and prices of sugar declined at Delhi (3.76%), Lucknow (0.14%), Jaipur (1.29%),

Mumbai (1.56%), Agartala (2.07%), Bhubneshwar (3.10%), Bangalore (2.11%), Chennai (5.11%), Hyderabad (1.04%.) and Thiruvananthapuram (4.42%), Prices of gram dal did not decline at any centre.

(c) As per available information 92,000 MT of wheat were imported on Government account in April/May, 2006. Besides, 3.40 lakh tonnes and 563 tonnes of pulses and sugar respectively were imported during the period February 2006 to May 2006.

Adherence of FAQ norms for procurement

3070. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether FAQ norms fixed for procurement and distribution of foodgrains are being flouted with impunity;

(b) if so, the measures taken to ensure that FAQ norms are followed during procurement and distribution of foodgrains;

(c) whether due to sub-standard foodgrains, the offtake of foodgrains is low at PDS; and

(d) the total number of FCI officers against whom disciplinary action initiated on account of sub-standard procurement and distribution of foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir, prescribed specifications are strictly adhered to during procurement and distribution of foodgrains. However, during inspection by various authorities, in stray cases, if violation of prescribed specifications for procurement and distribution are detected, immediate remedial measures are taken. The officials found indulging in such activities are immediately taken to task and suitable disciplinary action initiated against them.

To keep a strict vigilance over procurement and distribution of foodgrains strict norms of inspection are being implemented and as a result, quality complaints against the stocks procured during the current Kharif Marketing Season are negligible. With regard to distribution of foodgrains, various measures have been taken by the Government to ensure that only good